Pol 14 VIETS
Pol 23-8 VIETS

Department of State

TELEGRAM

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9-27-67 Saigon 7006

PAGE 01 SAIGON 07006 01 OF 02 270525Z

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ACTION EA 19

INFO GPM 03,SC 01,RSC 01,USIA 12,H 02,NSC 10,L 03,INR 07,P 04,CIA 04,
DOD 01,SP 02,SS 35,SAH 03,SAL 01,IO 21,AID 30,NIC 01,NSAE 00,
RSR 01,CU 04,/165 W

EXCISE

R 270330Z SEP 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7642
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4356
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 1014
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2615

Pol 14 VIETS 3-2 Vietnams
Pol 23-8 Vietnams

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 7006

SUBJECT: YOUTH, STUDENTS, AND ELECTIONS

REF: A. SAIGON A-197
B. SAIGON 6734
C. SAIGON 6735
D. SAIGON A-216

Pol 23-8 Vietnams
Pol 23-7 Vietnams

1. REF A DESCRIBED BEGINNINGS OF STUDENT PROTESTS AGAINST ALLEGED RIGGING OF SEPTEMBER 3 ELECTION; REF B REPORTED STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS OF SEPTEMBER 24; REF C WAS TEXT OF OPEN LETTER FROM STUDENTS TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON; REF D SUMMARIZES PROTEST DEVELOPMENTS SEPTEMBER 17-26. THIS CABLE IS

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 7006/ C O N F I D E N T I A L
ANALYSIS OF BASIS OF STUDENTS PROTESTS, LINKS WITH OTHER POLITICAL FORCES, STRENGTH OF PROTESTS AND LIKELY EFFECT ON

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE 12/24/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

Department of State TELEGRAM

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 07006 01 OF 02 270525Z

POLITICAL SITUATION.

2. THEMES OF PROTESTS -- PEACE, FAIR ELECTIONS, AND END TO AMERICAN INTERFERENCE IN VIETNAMESE AFFAIRS ARE PROBABLY GENERALLY POPULAR THEMES AMONG STUDENT POPULATION. STUDENTS ARE YOUNG AND LACK THE PERSPECTIVE TO REGARD SE. J ELECTIONS AS ADVANCE OVER THOSE OF DIEM PERIOD. THEY ARE IDEALISTICALLY IN FAVOR OF PEACE, DEMOCRACY, AND NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, WITHOUT CLEAR NOTIONS AS TO THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED. LIKE OTHER VIETNAMEYSJKHEY TEND TO CREDIT CONSPIRATORIAL EXPLANATIONS OF POLITICAL EVENTS. THEY FIND IT LOGICAL THAT AMERICANS, WITH SO MUCH AT STAKE IN VIETNAM AND SO MUCH POWER AVAILABLE HERE, WOULD INTERFERE IN ELECTIONS AND OTHER INTERNAL MATTERS. IN THEIR IGNORANCE OF AMERICAN POLICY AND POLITICS THEY ARE PREPARED TO BELIEVE THE MOST BIZARRE AND CONTRADICTORY EXPLANATIONS OF AMERICAN ACTIONSQJ. IN THEIR IGNORANCE OF STBTLETIES OF WORLD POLITICS THEY ARE NOT AWARE OF THE-IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR ACTIONS AND TEND TO REGARD THEIR ACTIONSAS A SIMPLE STAND FOR PRINCIPLES. THUS GENERAL

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 7006/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
STUDENT ATTITUDES NOT INCONSISTETNT WITH THOSE EXPRESSED IN COMMUNIQUES OF STUDENT PROTESTORS.

3. LINKS WITH OTHER POLITICAL FORCES -- STUDENTS CLAIM TO BE ACTING INDEPENDENTLY BUT THERE IS CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE LINKBEING THEM WITH OTHER POLITICAL FORCES.

A. WITH A QUANG BUDDHISTS -- WE HAVE UNDERSTOOD FOR SOME TIME THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SAIGON STUDENTS UNION WAS STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY CADRES OF THICH TRI QUANG.
A. I LEARNED RECENTLY FROM [redacted] b-1 ed

[redacted] THAT LEADERS OF THE VAN HANH STUDENT UNION ARE ALSO [redacted] QUANG MEN. SOME OF THE THEMES OF PROTESTS HAVE BEEN USED BEFORE BY TRI QUANG. STUDENT ANTI-RIGGING COMMITTEE [redacted] AS ADMITTED THAT BUDDHIST AND STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 WERE COORDINATED -- STUDENTS HEADING FOR ASSEMBLY AND MONKS FOR CENTRAL MARKET --

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Department of State TELEGRAM

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 07006 01 OF 02 270525Z

TO SPREAD THE POLICE THIN. MOREOVER, IT WAS ON THAT DATE THAT TRI QUANG FIRST BROADENED HIS ATTACK ON THE GVN FROM THE BUDDHISTS CHARTER ISSUE TO ELECTION RIGGING AND SENT DEMONSTRATORS INTO THE STREETS OF SAIGON, DANANG AND HUE IN PROTEST AGAINST

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 7006/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
ELECTIONS.

B. WITH DEFEATED PRESIDENTIAL AND SENATORIAL CANDIDATES -- PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES TRUONG DINH DZU, VU HONG KHANG AND HOANG CO BINH, AND SENATORIAL CANDIDATES PHAM THAI AND PHAM LOI, HAVE SPOKEN FREQUENTLY AT STUDENT RALLIES, AND DZU'S HARD-HITTING ATTACKS HAVE DELIGHTED HIS LISTENERS. [redacted] SAID ANYONE CAN SPEAK AT THESE RALLIES, AND HE HAS MADE A POINT OF CRITICIZING DZU AS "EVEN TRICKIER THAN THE PRESS HAS SAID". BUT HE TOLD EMBOFF PRIVATELY THAT THE STUDENTS WERE, IN EFFECT, PROVIDING CARDES AND MARCHERS FOR SORE LOSERS AMONG PRESIDENTIAL AND SENATORIAL CANDIDATES.

b-1
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C. WITH VIET CONG -- [redacted] AGREE THAT HARD EVIDENCE OF VC PENETRATION OF STUDENT RANKS IS HARD TO GET, BUT THAT CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE IS SIGNIFICANT. YOUTH LEADER [redacted] WHO IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO MISSION YOUTH OFFICERS AND WHO HAS BEEN FOLLOWING PROTESTS CLOSELY, TOLD EMBOFF THAT IT IS CERTAIN VC HAVE CELLS IN ALL FACULTIES OF SAIGON UNIVERSITY AND ARE ESPECIALLY STRONG IN SCIENCE FACULTY, WHICH TOOK EARLY LEAD IN PROTESTS AGAINST ELECTION AND INTRODUCED PEACE THEMES. [redacted] SAID CLEVER OR-

PAGE 5 RUMJIR 7006/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
CHESTRATION OF PROTESTS AND ESCALATION FROM ANTI-RIGGING TO PEACE AND ANTI-AMERICAN LINE SHOWS SIGNS OF VC WORK, WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS FAR CLEVERERE THAN TRI QU NG STRUGGLE EFFORT OF SPRING 1966. EXTRAVAGANT AND EXAGGERATED COVERAGE WHICH LIBERATION RADIO AND RADIO HANOI ARE GIVING PROTEST MOVEMENT ALSO SUGGEST COMMUNIST INVOLVEMENT.

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Department of State TELEGRAM

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 SAIGON 07006 01 OF 02 270525Z

D. WITH GEN LOAN AND VICE-PRESIDENT-ELECT-KY -- LAW STUDENTS HAVE IMPLIED, AND SSU HAVE DENIED, THAT LATTER ARE ARE COOPERATING WITH KY AND LOAN IN EFFORTS TO PUT PRESSURE ON THIEU IN CURRENT POWER STRUGGLE. WE ARE CERTAIN AT LEAST THAT STUDENTS HAD ADVANCE PERMISSION FROM LOAN FOR APPARENTLY SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATIONS OF THE 24TH, BUT BEYONG THIS HAVE NO CLEAR EVIDENCE OF KY/LOAN INVOLVEMENT.

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 07006 02 OF 02 272155Z

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ACTION EA 19

INFO GPM 03 SC 01 RSC 01 USIA 12 H 02 NSC 10 L 03 INR 07 P 04 CIA 04
DOD 01 SP 02 SS 35 SAH 03 SAL 01 IO 21 AID 30 NIC 01 NSAE 00
CU 04 RSR 01 /165 W

R 270330Z SEP 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7643
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4357
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 1015
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2616

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 7006

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y

4. STRENGTH OF PROTESTS -- DESPITE ALL THE GROUPS INTERESTED IN STIRRING STUDENTS UP, PROTESTS HAVE NOT AMOUNTED TO MUCH THUS FAR. STUDENT ANTI-RIGGING COMMITTEE HAS CALLED FOR BOYCOTT OF CLASSES, BUT CLASSES ARE NOT IN SESSION YET. IT HAS CALLED FOR BOYCOTT OF EXAMINATIONS, BUT FEW BOYCOTTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE AND FACULTY OF LETTERS WHOSE STUDENT GRBVP ALSO HEADED BY ANTI-RIGGING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KIEN BE, HAD TO BACK DOWN THIS WEEK ON ITS OWN BOYCOTT CAL. COMMITTEE HAS URGED CANDIDATES TO

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 7006/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L
WITHDRAW FROM LOWER HOUSE RACE, BUT
ONLY TWO HAVE DONE SO AND SEVERAL FORMER STUDENT LEADERS ARE

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Department of State TELEGRAM

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 07006 02 OF 02 272155Z

GOING AHEAD WITH THEIR C/NDIDATES. MANY STUDENT PARTICIPANTS IN MEETINGS ARE ONLOOKERS ENJOYING ATTACKS ON GVN AND US, BUT NOT BITTER OR INCLINED TO STRONG ACTION. DEMONSTRATION SEPTEMBER 24 MOBILIZED ONLY 200-300 STUDENTS, AND CAREFUL POLICE HANDLING CONTROLLED IT WHILE AVOIDING ARRESTS OR BILLY-CLUBS AND THUS CRETING NO MARTYRS. I CORPS OMMANDING GEN LAM HAS KEPT STUDENTS IN HUE AND DANANG UNDER CONTROL SO FAR. LAW STUDENTS GROUP HAS OPENLY CALLED ON ITS PEOPLE TO "REM IN CALM" AND HAS IMPLIED THAT SAIGON STUDENTS UNION IS WORKING FOR KY AND LOAN. THIS SUSPICION IS WIDELY SHARED. CATHOLIC STUDENTS, AND SUPPORTERS OF TRAN VAN HMUONG AND HA THUC KY, ARE PREPARED TOACCEPT THE ELECTION RESULTS. LOCAL AND FOREIGN PRESS, ANO VIET-NAM PRESS, HAVE GIVEN FULL COVERAGE TO STUDENT PROTESTS BUT NO PARTICULAR SUPPORT. SOME PAPERS HAVE NOTED THAT STUDENTS, DEFEATED CANDIDATES AND BUDDHISTS CAN AGREE ONLY ON A NEGATIVE PROGRAM OF INVALIDATION OF ELECTIONS. THERE SEEMS TO BE GENERAL DESIRE FOR STABILITY

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 7006/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L
AMONG WITH SOME OF THE STUDENT PROTEST THEMES. NEXT TEST OF STRENGTH OF PROTESTS, ACCORDING TO [redacted] WILL COME NIGHT FO SEPT 27-28 WHEN A "STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY NIGHT" WILL HE HELD AT SSU HEADQUARTERS TO KEEP STUDENTS' STRUGGLING SPIRITS UP AND PUT FORTHER PRESSURE ON LOWER HOUSE CANDIATES TO WITHDRAW. SSU WILL ALSO HAVE MEETING MORNING OF SEP 30, WHEN ASSEMBLY WILL MEET TO CONSIDER VALIDATION OF ELECTION; DEMONSTRATION COULD WELL TAKE PLACE THEN. b-1

5. CONCLUSION -- STUDENT RESTIVENESS IS A CONTINUING FACTOR IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND MOST STUDENT GROUPS HAVE BEEN DETERMINED FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE RIGGED AND HAVE BEEN UNSHAKEABLE IN THIS BELIEF. THE STUDENTS THEREFORE HAVE BEEN AN EASY GROUP TO EXPLOIT BY DEFEATED CANDIDATES, BUDDHISTS, THE VC AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN DISCREDITING THE ELECTIONS. IN SPITE OF THE PRESS ATTENTION THEY HAVE ATTRACTED STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND DEMONSTRATIONS SINCE

CONFIDENTIAL

Department of State TELEGRAM

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 07006 02 OF 02 272155Z

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 7006/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L
THE ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN ON A LIMITED SCALE, ACTIVELY INVOLVING ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF STUDENTS, ALTHOUGH UNDOUBTEDLY ENJOYING THE TACIT SUPPORT OF A MUCH GREATER NUMBER. THESE ACTIVITIES ARE HELPFUL TO THE OPPONENTS OF THE GVN IN THEIR EFFORTS TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF WIDESPREAD REJECTION OF THE ELECTIONS. AND THOSE OPPONENTS ARE MAKING THE MOST OF THEM. AT THEIR PRESENT LEVEL, HOWEVER, STUDENT CONCERN OVER AND REACTION TO THE ELECTIONS ARE NOT LIKELY TO HAVE MAJOR INFLUENCE ON THE OUTCOME OF THE VOTE ON VALIDATION.

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